

Notice of 30-Day Comment Period
For the
South Plateau Area Landscape Treatment Project Draft Environmental Assessment
Hebgen Lake Ranger District, Custer Gallatin National Forest
USDA FOREST SERVICE
Gallatin County, Montana

Opportunity to Comment

The USDA Forest Service is providing an opportunity for public review and comment on the draft Environmental Assessment for the South Plateau Area Landscape Treatment Project, located on the South Plateau, south and west of West Yellowstone, Montana. The legal description for the proposed project is T 14 N, R 5 E, T 15 N, R 5 E, T 16 N, R 5 E, T 15 N, R 4 E, T 16 N, R 4 E in Gallatin County, Montana. The Responsible Official for the project is Mary Erickson, Custer Gallatin Forest Supervisor.

This combined scoping/EA comment period is the only opportunity for individuals to provide public comment on this project. The Responsible Official does NOT anticipate providing an additional opportunity to submit written comments other than this scoping period

The Proposed Action proposes to implement a series of activities to reduce the risk or extent of and increase the resiliency to insect and disease infestation while providing wood products to local mills. Proposed activities would reduce hazardous fuels to increase fire suppression effectiveness and reduce risk to the public and first responders. The South Plateau project also proposes the closure and rehabilitation of Road 478 along the South Fork of the Madison River to improve water quality, and to open a portion of Road 1704 that is currently closed to the public to maintain the travel corridor.

The South Plateau Area Landscape Treatment Project Draft EA, along with supporting project documents, such as public notices, maps, and draft specialist reports are available online at the following location: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57353> If you are unable to access these documents online, a cd or flash drive with the requested documents can be sent to you at your request.

How to Comment and Timeframe

In compliance with 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 218 Subparts A and B, the Draft EA is available for public review and comment for 30 days beginning the day after publication of a legal notice in the *Bozeman Chronicle* (the newspaper of record). **Please provide comments on the draft EA by September 16, 2020.** Electronic submittal of comments is preferred, but you can use either of the following methods:

- 1) Electronically, through the Forest Service's CARA database, which is available at the following location: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=57353>; or
- 2) Paper copies of comments can be mailed to the CGNF, ATTN: South Plateau Project, PO Box 520, West Yellowstone, MT 59758.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc). All comments must be received or postmarked 30 days following the publication in the newspaper of record to have standing to object. In keeping with precautionary measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, if you are unable to submit electronic, fax, or postal objections and must submit them by hand to the Hebgen Lake Ranger District, please refer to signage on the front door regarding the delivery of hand delivered items, which will include a phone number to arrange delivery of your comments.

For the Forest Service objections process, only individuals or entities (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) who submit timely and specific written comments (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) about this proposed Project or activity during this public comment period established by the responsible official will be eligible to file an objection. This combined scoping-EA comment period is the only opportunity for individuals to provide public comment on this project. Other eligibility requirements are defined by 36 CFR 218.25(a)(3) and comments must include (1) name, address, email address, telephone number, and organization represented, if any; (2) postal address; (3) title of the document for which the comment is being submitted; (4) specific facts and supporting reasons for the responsible officials to consider; and (5) signature or other verification of identity upon request and the identity of the individual or entity who authored the comments. Individual members of an entity must submit their own individual comments in order to have eligibility to object as an individual. A timely submission will be determined as outlined in 36 CFR 218.25(a)(4). It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure timely receipt of any comments submitted.

Although comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered, anonymous comments will not provide the reviewer with standing to participate in subsequent administrative or judicial reviews. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name and address), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible.

For additional information regarding the Project, please contact Amee Rief, amee.rief@usda.gov, 406-823-6975.